

Appendix B



Housing Services Vulnerability Policy 2025-2027

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Form

[July 2024-July 2029]

Date created	January 2025
Approved by	Cabinet
Owner	Kerry Clifford
Version	1
Author	Kerry Clifford Assistant Director Housing & Neighbourhoods
Business Unit and Team	Housing & Neighbourhoods

Please [click this link](#) to find the EqIA guidance toolkit for support in completing the following form.

For translations, braille or large print versions of this document please email
equalities@stevenage.gov.uk.

First things first:

Does this policy, project, service, or other decision need an EqlA?

Title:	Housing Services Vulnerability Policy 2025-2027	
Please answer Yes or No to the following questions:		
Does it affect staff, service users or the wider community?		Yes
Has it been identified as being important to particular groups of people?		Yes
Does it or could it potentially affect different groups of people differently (unequal)?		No
Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities or exclusion issues?		Yes
Will it have an impact on how other organisations operate?		Yes
Is there potential for it to cause controversy or affect the council's reputation as a public service provider?		No

Where a positive impact is likely, will this help to:	
Remove discrimination and harassment?	Yes
Promote equal opportunities?	Yes
Encourage good relations?	Yes

If you answered 'Yes' to one or more of the above questions you should carry out an EqlA.

Or if you answered 'No' to all of the questions and decide that your activity doesn't need an EqlA you must explain below why it has no relevance to equality and diversity.

You should reference the information you used to support your decision below and seek approval from your Assistant Director before confirming this by sending this page to equalities@stevenage.gov.uk.

I determine that no EqlA is needed to inform the decision on the .

Name of assessor:

Decision approved by:

Role: Assistant Director Housing & Neighbourhoods Role: Assistant Director

Date:

Date: 03/02/2025

Equality Impact Assessment Form

For a policy, project, strategy, staff or service change, or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		Housing Services Vulnerability Policy 2025-2027			
Lead Assessor	Kerry Clifford			Assessment team	
Start date	Jan 25	End date	Jan 25		
When will the EqlA be reviewed? (Typically every 2 years)	Jan 2027				

Who may be affected by the proposed project?	Housing applicants and housing tenants Council staff and contractors
What are the key aims of the proposed project?	To have in place a policy framework to ensure that Stevenage Borough Council is in line with good practice and the expectations from the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman Service and that Council staff and contractors can recognise, respond and record vulnerabilities and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to service delivery where necessary and that tenants receive the help and support that they need to sustain their tenancies.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	SBC is a third party reporting centre for hate crime / discrimination and actively encouraging more organisations to	Promote equal opportunities	The service priorities aim to promote equalities through partnership working to ensure that all Stevenage resident	Encourage good relations	Engagement with a wide range of residents, community safety partners and Housing Services. Developing

	sign up as third party reporting centres to reach the wider community.		have equal opportunity access services.		relationships with vulnerable/marginalised groups through targeted outreach.
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What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<p>We have used data/information available both locally and nationally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of CORE data for the year preceding that identifies that approx. 80% of incoming tenants are considered vulnerable. • Information gained via tenancy audits and care plan reviews for those that consider themselves to have vulnerabilities, impairments, disabilities and complex challenges. • Review of vulnerability data that is captured during complaint handling processes. • Review of data relating to population increases with Hertfordshire 'Herts Insight' • Information published by the Housing Ombudsman service relating to complaint handling and vulnerability.
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In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	
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Evidence and Impact Assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age

Positive impact	Yes	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Any vulnerable applicant aged over 55 may benefit from the availability of Independent Living properties. The Council's independent Living team are committed to support residents within their own home to live independently and individual care plans are put in place to assess age related vulnerability. Housing Officers and tenancy sustainment officers support will record any age related vulnerabilities and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made and that reasonable aids and adaptations or suitable accommodation can be offered.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Support is provided to those requiring aids and adaptations, through allocation of Independent Living and Sheltered Accommodation and through specialist support provision.	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Tenant profile data needs to be reviewed for older tenants and how many currently reside in general needs housing stock compared to sheltered accommodation.		

Disability e.g., physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	Yes	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	The Policy sets out how the Council will respond to vulnerabilities and how it will recognise, respond and record. By proactively asking tenants whether they consider themselves to have any disabilities or impairments that make them vulnerable, this has a positive impact on this protected characteristic.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Upgrade housing management system to include more options for recording impairments and vulnerability that can be	

			segmented and reviewed to inform future service delivery.
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Gender Reassignment					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	We do not have any service data to show that there would be any impact on this group. Staff do have an awareness of this particular group and as with any other groups will ensure that no group is disadvantaged.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Marriage or Civil Partnership					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	We do not have and service data to show that there would be any impact on this group. Staff do have an awareness of this particular group, that domestic abuse can be a feature of some marital or civil partnerships and are trained t recognise and signpost to relevant services for support.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Pregnancy & Maternity					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	We do not have and service data to show that there would be any impact on this group. Staff do have an awareness of this particular group, that domestic abuse can be a feature of some marital or civil partnerships and are trained t recognise and signpost to relevant services for support.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Race					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	This Policy will be for all those living within Stevenage, including BME groups. There is no evidence that shows that this group is disproportionately impacted by the Housing Service Vulnerability Policy, however hate crime is recorded and data is being compiled to ensure that residents who may struggle to interact with us because English is not their first language.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Data analysis on languages spoken and where tenants need more support to access services in different languages.		

Religion or Belief					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	The Housing Service does not have any service data to show that there would be any impact on this group.				

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	
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Sex					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	The Housing Service does not have any service data to show that there would be any impact on this group.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Sexual Orientation e.g., straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	None	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	The Housing Service does not have any service data to show that there would be any impact on this group.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Socio-economic¹					
e.g., low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	Yes	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	The Council has access to rent arrears data, possibly indicating low income or financial hardship, which can often be exacerbated by vulnerabilities or complex challenges. The Vulnerability Policy will have a positive impact on these groups and tenants will be supported by officers to identify support options available.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Additional Considerations					
Please outline any other potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact	Yes	Negative impact	None	Unequal impact	None
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Consultation Findings

Document any feedback gained from the following groups of people:

Staff?	Staff have been encouraged to feedback on the Policy and it has also been recommended by the Executive Housing Working Group.	Residents?	The Policy will be consulted on prior to recommendations from Cabinet for the Strategic Director (RP) to approve the Policy, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder. Consultation will be for a minimum of four weeks and will be undertaken by a mix of tenants and prospective tenants.
Voluntary & community sector?		Partners?	Partners agree that in order to make a difference it is essential that we work co-operatively, and information is shared regularly.
Other stakeholders?			

Overall Conclusion & Future Activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one):		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	As below
	2b. Continue as planned	
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations:

Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Data analysis on languages spoken and where tenants need more support to access services in different languages.	This will ensure that groups who may not have English with their first language are provided with interpretation and support to access services.	Head of Housing	December 2025	Will become part of the normal monitoring processes
Upgrade housing management system to include more options for recording impairments and vulnerability that can be segmented and reviewed to inform future service delivery.	Vulnerabilities will be clearly recorded and data can be used to shape services.	Corporate Transformation and Housing IT teams.	December 2025	Through Policy implementation and reviews.
Allocations Policy review to ensure that it does not discriminate against those in protected groups but also that may have had a criminal history.	Promote confidence in both staff members and the public that the correct decisions are made and do not direct or indirectly discriminate.	Housing Supply and Lettings Manager.	July 2025	Through Policy Implementation and reviews.

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Kerry Clifford

Date: Jan 2024

Please send this EqIA to equalities@stevenage.gov.uk for critical friend feedback and for final submittance with the associated project.